

## **ANALYSIS OF STUDENTS' LEARNING STYLE AND THEIR LISTENING ABILITY**

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### **Abstract**

Tujuan penelitian ini adalah untuk meneliti tipe gaya belajar yang dimiliki siswa dan meneliti hasil nilai mendengarkan siswa berdasarkan gaya belajar. Sampel penelitian adalah siswa SMA kelas XI IPA 1 yang terdiri dari 32 siswa. Desain penelitian menggunakan metode deskriptif kuantitatif. Dalam pengumpulan data, peneliti menggunakan kuesioner, dokumen, dan tes mendengarkan. Data dianalisis dengan membandingkan hasil rata-rata dengan presentase. Berdasarkan hasil kuesioner dan dokumen, ditemukan tiga gaya belajar siswa: 37,5% visual, 40,62% auditori, dan 21,87% kinestetik. Auditori adalah gaya belajar yang paling dominan. Hasil tes mendengarkan dari siswa visual adalah 57,01, auditori 79,14, dan kinestetik 56,11. Kesimpulannya, siswa auditori memperoleh nilai tertinggi pada tes mendengarkan. Diharapkan guru mempunyai prioritas dalam menyampaikan pelajaran berdasarkan gaya belajar siswa secara efektif.

The purposes of this research are to find out the types of learning style which students have and to find out the students' means score of listening and their learning style. The sample of the research is the students of SMA class XI IPA 1 consisting of 32 students. The design is in form of descriptive quantitative research. In collecting the data, the researcher used questionnaire, document and listening test. In this research, the data are analyzed by comparing the mean score in test manually by percentage. Based on the result of questionnaire and document, the students had three types of learning style: they are 37.5% of visual, 40.62% of auditory, and 21.87% of kinesthetic, in which auditory is the most dominant. As the result of listening test, the mean score of visual is 57.01, auditory is 79.14, and kinesthetic is 56.11. It showed that auditory students obtain the highest score in listening. It is hoped that the teacher has the priority in delivering the lesson according to the students' learning style effectively.

**Keywords:** auditory, kinesthetic, learning style, listening, visual

## **INTRODUCTION**

English is the world's most important tool of communication for the people from different countries to convey idea, message, purpose, feelings, and opinions to others. In Indonesia, English is taught as a foreign language learned from elementary school up to university level. It is learned formally as a compulsory subject in the school. In learning English, there are four language skills that teacher has to teach to the students, namely listening, speaking, reading, and writing. The skills are crucial in developing the language competence. The students should be able to use English in real communication.

From the four of language skills, listening is the first step to learn and it must be learned earlier. So before students understand and begin to speak, they have to hear sound, voice, and words first. Listening skill is a complex language skill because it is an invisible mental process. The students must discriminate between sounds, understand vocabulary and grammatical structures, interpret stress and intention, try to find the meaning what the speaker actually says. Listening is an active process of interpretation in which listeners match what they hear to what they know. Practically, the teachers face difficulties to teach the four language skills completely and the students also cannot receive it perfectly. However, the condition of senior high school shows that the students get difficulties in listening. They cannot listen well and get difficulties to understand information through listening.

Listening is the first skill that the students have to master before learning a language. Listening is the skill that is acquired earlier, especially if they have not

yet learnt to read. So in language skills, listening is the main point of studying language before other skills. According to Morley (1991), listening is the most common communicative activity in daily life, we almost listen twice as much as we speak, four times more we read, and five times more than we write because it is the first skill when we learn a language.

Underwood (1990) states that listening is the activity of paying attention to and trying to get meaning from something we hear. To listen successfully to spoken language, we need to be able to work out what speakers mean when they use particular words in particular ways on particular occasions, and not simply to understand the word themselves. Moreover, listening is not only the way of learning language that can give the student information from which to build up the knowledge necessary for using the language but also the way to get information or to understand the sense of communication which will be sent in oral.

Referring to the problem faced by students, although the students have a good treatment and facility in teaching learning activity, actually they have different style of learning and different way to achieve the learning competence. It can be revealed that the teacher does not care yet towards the students' learning needs. The most important is how the teacher identifies the way their students able to learn language learning by their own style because every students are unique individual and born with differences, including differences in the way to learn something.

The students can perceive information using a single style or be multi style but definitely there is one most dominant. Hence, the teachers need to be aware to the

students' learning styles in order to provide instructions tailored to the student's individual preference. Dividing students according to style is necessary so that the effectiveness of each lesson to different VAK learning style can be observed. Auditory students tend to attain information by discussion and listening. For visual style, the students are more prone to accept learning through interpreting charts, graph figures, and pictures. While kinesthetic style leans more towards accepting learning based on behavior such as touch, feel, see, and listen. Based on each style's tendency, researcher hopes to conduct a study to obtain students' learning process.

Brown (2000) defines learning styles as the manner in which individuals perceive and process information in learning situations. He argues that learning style preference is one aspect of learning style, and refers to the choice of one learning situation or condition over another. According to Celcia-Murcia (2001) as quoted by Gilakjani (2012) defines learning styles as the general approaches—for example, global or analytic, auditory or visual—that students use in acquiring a new language or in learning any other subject. The manner in which a learner perceives, interacts with, and responds to the learning environment. Learning style is sometimes defined as the characteristic cognitive, affective, social, and physiological behaviors that serve as relatively stable indicators of how students perceive, interact with, and respond to the learning environment” (MacKeracher, 2004) as quoted by Gilakjani (2012). Whereas Mok (2003) defines learning style as learning approaches as preferred by student. Meanwhile, Drago and Wagner (2004) identify learning style as differences that exists between individuals over each learning methods. Achievements in educational field depend much on the

ability to adapt lesson based on each individual's aspects. A teacher should be creating an environment to fulfill the demand of students' various learning styles, as well as knowing the importance of teaching by using various learning styles (Drago & Wagner 2004).

Learning style can be helpful and beneficial to the student in becoming more focused on an attentive student that will increase learning process. Discovering the learning style will allow the student to determine their own personal strengths and weaknesses and learn from them. Teachers can incorporate learning styles into their classroom by identifying the learning styles of each student, matching teaching style to learning style for difficult tasks, strengthening weaker learning styles through easier tasks and drill, teaching students, and learning style selection. Learning based on Visual-Auditory-Kinesthetic (VAK) learning style provide a medium for self-knowledge and exploring opportunities in classrooms, thus, making a more productive learning experience and enjoyment among students. It has been proven that students possess diversity in learning styles, which has become their priority, and teachers should effectively deliver the lesson according to the students' style.

Every student has his/her own learning style, it is like every individual who has his/her own signature. By identifying students' learning style, the teachers can organize classroom to respond to their individual needs for quiet or sound, warm or cool temperatures, seating arrangement. The teachers can recognize the patterns in which people tend to concentrate best- alone, with others, and so on. The teacher becomes aware of the senses through which people remember difficult

information most easily – by speaking, hearing, seeing , manipulating, writing, or note taking or experiencing. Learning style is a biologically and developmentally imposed set of personal characteristics that make the same teaching method effective for some students and ineffective for others. No learning style is either better or worse than another, since each style has similar intelligence ranges. Most students can master the same learning process; how they master it is determined by their individual style.

Hence, for helping students' learning needs, the teacher has to teach as many preference as possible because the learning styles provide not only the students' understanding of learning process and also provide the students' own personality, includes their strength and weaknesses. The students are able to determine his or her own personal strengths and weaknesses and the teachers should achieve a match between teaching strategies and the students' unique learning styles. Accommodating teaching to learning styles improves students' overall learning results, increases both motivation and efficiency and enables a positive attitude towards the language being learned. The purpose of using learning styles is to find the best ways for both students to learn effectively and teachers to teach efficiently.

Based on the statements above, the objectives of the research are:

1. To find out the types of learning style students have
2. To find out the students' means score of listening and their learning style

## **METHOD**

The research designed in form of descriptive quantitative research. This method was described current status of identified variable and it was aimed to provide systematic information about a phenomenon. Systematic collection of information required careful measurement through an investigation of the problem. In this research, the researcher collected the data from the investigation by conducting the questionnaires and analyzing the documents in which these data would be scored statistically. The research finds out the types of learning style students have and the students' means score of listening and their learning style. In this way the researcher collected the data from the students' questionnaire and documents. It was aimed at finding out the students' style into visual, auditory, and kinesthetic. Then, the researcher was assessed them through test of listening to identify their means score in order to conclude the result. The result were analyzed by comparing the mean score in test manually using by percentage correct (Lyman, 1971: 95).

The subject of the research was the first year students of SMA consisting of eight classes. XI IPA 1 class was chosen as the experimental class and XI IPA 2 class as the try out class by using purposive sampling. Purposive sampling is a sampling technique on purpose. It means that researchers determine their own samples to be taken because there are certain consideration. So, samples are not taken randomly, but determined by the researchers. (Sugiyono, 2005: 53). Questionnaire and document were administered in order to gain accurate data. A try-out test was conducted in XI IPA 2 class before the test of listening was carried out. The test was given to the students in order to know the quality of the test as the instrument

of the research; they are (1) validity, (2) reliability, (3) level of difficulty, and (4) discrimination power of the test. The result of the try out test was analyzed aimed at knowing which items are good to be used in the test of listening.

## **RESULTS**

This section attempt to answer the first research question, that is, what are the types of learning style students have. In order to answer the research question, the researcher conducts questionnaire and analyze the document.

### **1. Students' Learning Style**

In this research, students' learning style was determined by collecting the data from questionnaire and document. Students learn in many different ways. Learning style showed how well students learn material. The questionnaire was aimed to assess which way students prefer to learn. It was described the characteristics of those students in 3 style; Visual, Auditory, Kinesthetic. For gaining a better understanding of themselves as a students, each of them need to evaluate the way student prefer to learn or process information. By doing so, student would be able to develop strategies which would enhance students learning potential.

The description of questionnaire gave information to the students about ways in which students learn best in simple methodology. The students have finished to fill all of the multiple choice, then they added up how many A's, B's and C's they selected which were served below :



If students selected to choose dominant of A, it means that generally students learn well from *seeing words* in books, on the chalkboard, and in workbooks. They remember and understand information and instructions better if they read the material. they do not need as much oral explanation as an auditory students, and they can often learn alone, with a book. They should take notes of lesson and oral directions if want to remember the information.

If students selected to choose dominant of B, it means that generally students learn from *hearing words* spoken and from oral explanations. They may remember information by reading aloud or moving their lips as you read, especially when they are learning new material. They benefit from hearing audio tapes, lectures, and class discussions. They benefit from making tapes to listen to, by teaching other students, and by conversing with the teacher.

If students selected to choose dominant of C, it means that generally students learn best by experience, by being involved physically in classroom experiences. They remember information well when they actively participate in activities, field trips, and role-playing in the classroom. A combination of stimuli--for example, an audiotape combined with an activity--will help them understand new material.

Based on the data obtained from the questionnaire, it was found that there was 32 number of students in XI IPA 1, they had divided into three type of learning style based on assessment of questionnaire. It was found there were 12 visual students, 13 auditory students, and 7 kinesthetic students. On the other hand, there was 37.5 % of the visual students, 40.62% of the auditory students, and 21.87% of the kinesthetic students.

The researcher took students' document for making her research more consistent. This purpose of taking documents was to determine their learning style. The students wrote on the paper their unforgettable experiences based on true story and presented by retelling in front of the class. In this section the researcher began to observe the student while retelling class was being proceeding. According to De Porter & Hernacki (1999) students' learning style can be seen while reminding their unforgettable experiences or true stories, their eyes movement would be reacted unconsciously.

Having done the analysis of document based on students' true story which was presented by themselves in front of class, it was found as follow :

✓ ***Visual***

Visual students while begin concentrating to retell the stories, their eyes tent to see the upstairs, the handwriting usually are neat and clean, and their stories usually are monotonous/less of catching the audiences' attention.

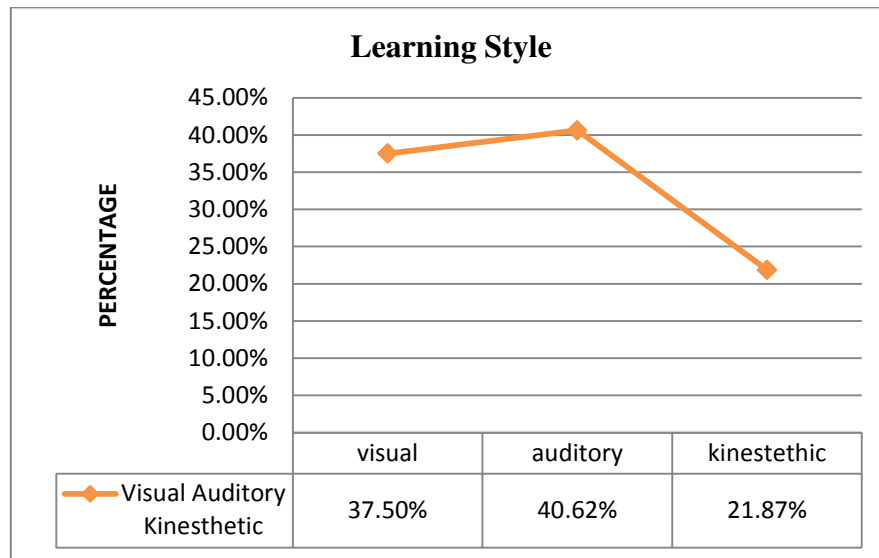
✓ ***Auditory***

Auditory students while concentrating to retell the stories, their eyes tent to see right and left fast, speak quickly, the handwriting usually are un-well regulated,, narrate cleverly, write story effortlessly.

✓ ***Kinesthetic***

Kinesthetic students while concentrating to retell the stories, their eyes tent to see the downstairs, most often move around a lot, fiddle with pens and pencils and touch things, speak slowly, the handwriting usually are un-well regulated.

Figure 1. Students' Learning Style



This section attempt to answer the second research question, that is how are the students' means score of listening and their learning style. In order to answer research question, the researcher conducts listening test when questionnaire and document were administered.

## 2. Students' Listening Achievement

The material of listening was related to the students' English handbook based on KTSP curriculum of 2006 (Astuti, 2010) at second grade of senior high school. The instrument for collecting data was written test in form of a suitable word in each blank (form of noun/verb/adverb/adjective) and the numbers of the items in the test were 70 items. There were three sections of listening test, each section consist of listening test for visual, auditory and kinesthetic students which had different part, topic, and instruction. Listening test for visual students tend to use chart, table, diagrams and pictures, auditory students tent to use the spoken word, and kinesthetic students tent to use the practical hands. The topic of the materials

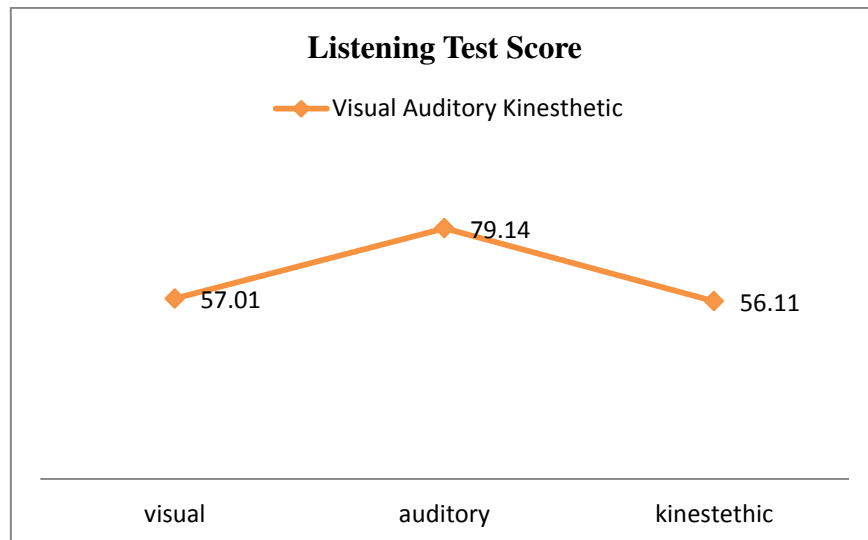
was divided into three sections; section 1 were about listening the dialogs expressing greetings and introductions, listening description monologue, listening greeting customs around the world; section 2 were about listening to a spoof, listening to the song, listening to the announcement, listening to the hortatory expression monologue; section 3 were about ask for and give directions, take and leave messages while telephoning, present instructions to do things, and listening to a procedures monologue.

The type of listening test in Section 1, the students have the clues (charts, boxes, tables, and pictures) as a help to answer the test. It means that the clues related to the characteristics of visual students which required explanations of visual directions. Section 2, the students have no clues as a help them to answer the test. It means that the clues related to the characteristics of auditory students who are able to follow oral direction, spoken word or listening to the recorder application. Section 3, the students have the clues (direction, and description monologue) as a help to answer the test. It means that the clues related to the characteristics of kinesthetic students who need to be active with their hands, gestures, and directly experience.

From the figure 2 below, it can be seen that the average students' score of listening test. The mean score of visual student was 57.01, auditory student was 79.14, and kinesthetic students was 56.11. The result showed that the auditory students obtain the highest score of listening. It is found that learning style plays important in aspect of learning to increase students' academic achievement. They can better perform in tests, study more effectively, learn more in classroom and be

more successful. By using learning style, the students would be more enthusiastic and more motivated for improving their ability in listening and helping them to raise their confidence to face the learning problems.

Figure 2. Students' Mean Score of Listening Test



## CONCLUSIONS AND SUGGESTIONS

In line with the results of the data analysis, the writer comes to this following conclusion:

1. Based on the results, it is found that the students had three types of learning styles: visual; auditory; and kinesthetic. The most dominant learning style the students have is auditory. It was found there was 37.5 % of visual, 40.62% of auditory, and 21.87% of kinesthetic.
2. The proportion of students' mean score of listening and their learning style showed that the mean score of visual students was 57.01, auditory students was 79.14 and kinesthetic students was 56.11. It can be concluded that auditory students obtain the highest score in listening.

Referring to the conclusion above, some suggestions can be listed as follows:

1. The teachers are expected to explore more information and knowledge about the importance of learning style, thus making a more productive learning experience and enjoyment among students.
2. The teachers should give more listening practice which suitable students possess diversity in learning styles, which has become the priority and should effectively deliver the lesson according to the students' learning style.

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